

A
LETTER

FROM

Mr. *Alexander Webster*

To the Reverend

Mr. *Ralph Erskine*;

CONTAINING

A VINDICATION of Mr. *Webster's* Postscript to his second Edition of *Divine Influence, &c.*

In answer to

Mr. *Erskine's* Charge of Fraud and Falshood, &c.

May that Prayer for the Adversaries be heard, *Fill their Faces with Shame!* Mr. *Ralph Erskine's* own Letter to Mr. *Wesley*, 1st Paragraph near the End.

— *How Reason reels!* —

O what a Miracle to Man is Man!

Night Thoughts, P. 3.

EDINBURGH,

Printed by *Thomas Lumisden* and *John Robertson*, and sold by *John Traill* Book-seller in the *Parliament-clofs*, and other Book-sellers in Town. M.D.C.C.XLIII.

LETTER

Mr. [Name]

[Address]

[City]

[State]

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th inst.

in relation to the [Subject]

[Details]

I am, Sir,

Very respectfully,
Yours, [Name]

[Signature]

Very truly yours,

[Name]

[Address]

[City]

[State]

I am, Sir, Very truly yours,

[Signature]

[Name]

Respectfully,
Yours, [Name]

[Address]

[City]

Reverend Sir,

IF you apprehend from the Title-page any Design of replying *particularly* to your several Remarks, you will be happily disappointed; of these I am to leave you in the full and quiet Possession, having neither Time nor Inclination to travel thro' a *Labyrinth* of *Inconsistencies*, not to say worse: And, if therefore your *implicite Followers* shall fancy them unanswerable, far be it from me to disturb the pleasant Dream.

'Tis the clearing a misrepresented Fact, on which your pretended Reasonings proceed, that I have mainly in View, while addressing you in this publick Manner.

FRAUD and FALSHOOD discovered, &c. the Title of your Missive, is extremely well calculated to spread *Calumny* and *Slander*, and may have its own Weight with those who *only* regard the Author's Name and the Frontispiece; but to such as look further into the Performance, the *Discovery* will indeed possibly appear, but on the opposite Side to *that* Good Mr. *Erskine* designs.

As this *extraordinary Libel* is wholly founded on Supposition that the Copy of your Letter to Mr. *Wesley*, printed in my Postscript, is *false* and *spurious*; I need only, for my Vindication, observe,—That your Letter as there published, in both *Title* and *Contents*, is exactly copied from your Letter said to be taken out of Mr. *Wesley's* Journal sent from *London* to Mr. *Traill* Bookseller, and by him delivered to me.—That the Journal itself not being then in *Scotland*, so far as after the strictest Enquiry I could learn, there was no Opportunity of comparing

them.— That however, having sometime thereafter received the printed Journal from *England*, I had the Satisfaction to find that your Letter, as publish'd by me, does not differ in one *Syllable* from that insert in the Journal.— But perceiving likewise, that what Mr. *Traill's* Correspondent, and consequently I in my Postscript, had intitled, *Copy of a Letter*, is by Mr. *Wesley* in the Journal only said to be *Part of a Letter*; I took the first Opportunity of rectifying the Mistake, which was done at my Desire by the Reverend Mr. *Robe* in the Postscript to his third Letter, dated *Kilfyth January 10th 1743*, and published that same Month, wherein he likewise expresseth my sincere Wish that you would favour the World with your whole Letter, to cast more Light on this Affair.

From these plain Facts, the Vouchers whereof ly in Mr. *Traill's* Hand open to the Inspection of every Mortal (*a*), it is obvious, supposing your Letter imperfect or altered, that I may wash my Hands in Innocence.— And it will doubtless surprize the Reader to be informed, that of *these Facts* you was not, *Dear Sir*, unacquainted, nor could you be ignorant.— Was not the original Letter to Mr. *Traill*, and my Postscript, sent by me to you when you was at *Edinburgh*, on *Thursday* the 3d of *February*, that you might compare them one with another? Did not Mr. *Traill*, by a subscribed Letter printed in both News-papers *February 17th*, assert their *exact Agreement*, and that every one had access to see the Original at his Shop? — Was not Mr. *Robe's* Letter then laid

(*a*) *Viz.* Mr. *Webster's* Postscript; --- The original Letter sent to Mr. *Traill* from *London*; --- An Attestation of several Persons of Credit, who were so good as at my Desire to make all possible Enquiry, without Success, for a Copy of Mr. *Wesley's* Journal both before and after the Publication of my Postscript; --- The Copy of Mr. *Wesley's* Journal sent to me from *England* in the Beginning of *January*, which to this Hour is the only one to be found in *Scotland*; --- Mr. *Robe's* third Letter; With an Attestation, by Messieurs *Lumisdan* and *Robertson* Printers, that the said Letter and Postscript was published on the 29th *January*, tho' not advertised in the News-papers till *February 3d*; --- and that the Manuscript was in their Hand more than 10 or 12 Days before.

laid before you? And was not Mr. *Wesley's Journal* actually delivered to you, which you kept from Evening to Morning? What then mean the many Insinuations of my having mangled or curtailed your Letter? And how can you adventure to say, P. 2. "I sent to *Edinburgh* for "Mr. *Wesley's Journal*, that I might understand whether "it was Mr. *Webster* or Mr. *Wesley*, or both, that had "mangled and mutilate my Letter; but it could not be "found among the Booksellers there, so that I want yet "the Advantage of knowing how that Matter stands?" Can you, in Consistency with Honour and Truth, tell the World in a Pamphlet published the 12th of *March*, only two Days ago, that, because the Journal could not be found among the Booksellers, you want the Advantage of knowing whether Mr. *Wesley* or I had altered your Letter, while yet this Journal was actually in your Possession on the 3d of *February*? — Will it vindicate you to say, that your Letter bears Date, *Dum. January 26th*? I hope you won't pretend it was printed on that very Day, or even on the 3d of *February*? You have unluckily cut off this Pretence, by advertising in the *Caledonian Mercury*, *February 15th*, that your Pamphlet could not be published till the 12th of *March*, the Printers being hurried with other Business in the End of the Session. Would it not therefore have been fair and honest, to have altered this Passage during the long Interval, or to have added a Postscript acknowledging that you had now seen Mr. *Wesley's Journal*, and that he, not Mr. *Webster*, was chargeable with the alledged Variations? This indeed would have destroyed your Design of defaming a Character which it seems you was resolved to blacken by any Means, Fraud and Falshood not excepted. I must be forgiven to say so, especially seeing you have in this Interval subjoined an Advertisement to your Pamphlet, p. 58. after you saw Mr. *Wesley's Journal*, and could have perused Mr. *Traill's Letter*, as appears from the mention you make in the Advertisement of Mr. *Traill's Correspondent*, Mr. *Robe's Letter*, &c. — One might in this Advertisement at least have expected to find the Fact fairly stated; but,

on

on the contrary, you judged proper to draw a Vail over the *exact Resemblance* 'twixt your Letter as published by me and *that* sent from *London*, and the *entire Agreement* of *both* with the Copy in the Journal. Nay, you are not there afraid to insinuate, that I saw fit to publish Mr. *Robe's* Postscript, "*after I was no doubt apprised that your full Letter was in the Press;*" tho' it is true and evident, that Mr. *Robe's* Letter was with its Postscript put into the Printer's Hands before the Date of yours at *Dunfermline*. You seem likewise, p. 58. to apprehend that I designed to impose on the Publick, by saying that your Letter was in Mr. *Wesley's* Journal, p. 62. *June 1739*, while as yet I had not seen the Journal; and attempt to be witty on your Letter's being insert three Months before it was written. I said so then, *Sir*, because Mr. *Trail's* Correspondent had so affirmed; and can now say it again, after ocular Inspection. Your Letter is indeed insert in the Journal, p. 62. *June 1739*; but these who have had the like Opportunity with you, of looking into the Journal, may observe, that he does not *date* your Letter, and that the Journal was not published as you affirm *THAT* Month, no not till the Year 1742, when he has thrown the Materials together without strict Regard to the Order of Time: And this explains the whole Mystery.

I suppose the Reader by this Time will be abundantly satisfied, that in the present Case I have acted in *every Puntillo* with the strictest Regard to Truth; and that, *whatever* Imperfection may attend your Letter as published by me, I was naturally led to think it *genuine* and *complete*. I heartily agree with you, that the expunging Trade does not contribute much to the Credit of any Cause; and hope always to have so much Honour, abstracting from Religion, as not to join Issue with *SOME* of your Reverend Brethren in the *unlawful Commerce*.

You say, p. 2. "If Mr. *Wesley's* Journal had my Letter full and complete, then Mr. *Webster* is the Mangler of it." Well, seeing he has it not complete, and no otherwise than in my Copy, ought not I to be assolkied? No, by no means: For you proceed, "If not, yet had not
" he

“ he (Mr. *Webster*) been too fond of seeking Advantages
 “ against me, he might have suspected the very first
 “ Words of the Letter not to be my common Stile; for
 “ his Copy of it begins thus, *I desire to bless MY Lord,*
 “ &c. It is not so in my Copy: And tho’ Mr. *Webster*
 “ has sometimes heard me, and oftentimes seen my Writings,
 “ yet I suppose this is the first Time that ever he heard
 “ or saw this to be my Way of speaking or writing.”
 It seems you had only said in the Original, *I desire to*
bless THE Lord, &c. I own this remarkable Change
 of THE into MY, did not occur at first View; it was
 certainly a proper Key, had I adverted, for detecting the
 whole Falshood. Such glaring Fraud, in the very Intro-
 duction, foretels some gloomy Scene will open: And, that
 I may do you all Manner of Justice, I shall present the
 whole frightful Circumstances with which it appears in
 your own Pamphlet; and, because you think necessary,
 shall first publish Mr. *Wesley’s* Letter (to which yours was
 an Answer) as you have it, p. 5.

Reverend and dear Sir, Bristol, Aug. 24. 1739.

“ — MAny Souls hath our blessed Lord here turned
 “ from Darknes unto Light, and from
 “ the Power of Satan unto God; a great and effectual
 “ Door is indeed opened among us, and the many Adver-
 “ saries cannot shut it: But what a little surprized us
 “ at first, was the outward Manner wherein most of these
 “ were affected, who are cut to the Heart by the Sword
 “ of the Spirit. Some of them drop down as dead,
 “ having no Strength nor Appearance of Life left in them.
 “ Some burst out into strong Cries and Tears, some ex-
 “ ceedingly tremble and quake, from some great Drops
 “ of Sweat fall to the Ground, others struggle as in the
 “ Agonies of Death, so that four or five strong Men can
 “ hardly restrain a weak Woman or a Child from hur-
 “ ring themselves or others. Of these many are in that
 “ Hour filled with Peace and Joy, others continue Days
 “ or Weeks in Heaviness, so that sometimes their Bodies
 “ almost sink under the Weight of the wounded Spirit.

" I should be glad to know whether any outward
 " Appearances like these have been among you, and
 " how the Work of the Lord prospers in your Hands.
 " It would be a Comfort to our little Flock, in whose
 " Prayers you and your Fellow-labourers are not for-
 " gotten. O may you see Satan as Lightning fall from
 " Heaven! We have (forty or fifty of us) been this Day
 " calling together upon our God, that he would please
 " to hasten his Kingdom. I commend you and your
 " dear Brother (both after the Flesh and after the Spirit)
 " to his Protection, and am,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother, and Servant in Christ,

JOHN WESLEY.

You go on, p. 6. *The true Copy of my Answer to the above Letter is as follows, wherein I have put these Places in a different Character which Mr. Webster's Copy passes over, and put a Mark also upon the Places that are alter'd or otherwise express'd than in this original Copy.*

R. and D. Sir,

Dunfermline, Sept. 28. 1739.

" — I Desire to bless * the Lord for the good and
 " great News your Letter bears, about the
 " Lord's turning many Souls from Darkness to Light,
 " and from the Power of Satan unto God, and that such
 " a great and effectual Door is opened among you as
 " the many Adversaries cannot shut. May he that hath
 " the Keys of the House of *David*, that openeth and
 " no Man shutteth, and shutteth and no Man openeth,
 " set the Door of Faith more and more open among
 " you, till his House be filled, and till he gather to-
 " gether the Outcasts of *Israel*; and may that Prayer for
 " Adversaries be heard, *Fill their Faces with Shame,*
 " *that they may seek thy Name, O Lord.*

" As to the outward Manner you speak of, wherein
 " most of these were affected, who were cut to the Heart
 " by the Sword of the Spirit, no Wonder than they
 " were

* Mr. Webster's Copy has it, *MT Lord*.

* were at first surprising to you, since they are indeed
 " so very rare, that have been thus pricked and wound-
 " ed; yet some of the Instances you give, seem to be
 " exemplified in the outward Manner wherein *Paul* and
 " the *Jaylor* were at first affected, as also *Peter's* Hearers,
 " *Acts* ii. The last Instance you give of some strug-
 " gling as in the Agonies of Death, and in such a man-
 " ner as four or five strong Men can hardly restrain a
 " weak Woman † or a Child from hurting themselves or
 " others, this is to me somewhat more inexplicable, if
 " it do not resemble the Child spoke of *Mark* ix. 26.
 " and *Luke* ix. 42. of whom it is said, that when he
 " was yet coming, the Devil threw him down and tare
 " him; or what Influence sudden and sharp Awakenings
 " may have upon || sudden bodily Convulsions, I pretend
 " not to explain; but I make no Question, Satan, so far
 " as he gets Power, may exert himself on such Occasions,
 " partly to mar and hinder the Beginning of the good
 " Work in the Persons that are ** touched with the
 " sharp Arrows of Conviction, the Enemy being unwill-
 " ling to quit his old Possession; and partly also to prevent
 " the Success of the Gospel on others, while he seeks thus
 " to disparage the Work of God, and bring it under
 " Contempt and Reproach, as if it tended to lead People
 " only to Madness and Distraction: And in the mean
 " time, a holy sovereign God may permit it for hardning
 " a wicked Generation, justly leaving them to stumble,
 " and for trying the Faith and Constancy of his own Chil-
 " dren, whom he has called effectually. However, the
 " merciful Issue of these Conflicts, in the Conversion of
 " these Persons thus affected, is the main thing; when
 " they are brought, by the saving Arm of God, to re-
 " ceive Jesus Christ, to have Joy and Peace in believing,
 " and then to walk in him, and give Evidence that the
 " Work is a saving Work at length, whether more
 " B " quickly

† Mr. Webster's Copy has it, *A weak Woman from hurting her-
 self and others.*

|| Mr. Webster's, *Upon the Body.*

** Mr. Webster's, *THUS* touched.

“ quickly or gradually accomplished, there is great Mat-
 “ ter of Praile.

“ *As to the Work of God among us, an Account where-*
 “ *of you seem to desiderate; though we cannot deny but*
 “ *we sensibly feel now and then some remarkable Breath-*
 “ *ings of the Spirit of God in praying and preaching, and*
 “ *frequently hear of savoury Impressions made by the*
 “ *Word upon the Hearts of People, and of some good*
 “ *Fruits following; and though any Instances of his*
 “ *powerful Presence this Way seem at this Juncture to*
 “ *relate more to the carrying on of the good Work where*
 “ *begun, than to the remarkable Conversion of others:*
 “ *Yet we want not Instances of his Power and Pity this*
 “ *Way, though not appearing outwardly in such sudden*
 “ *and visible Effects as these you mention. All the out-*
 “ *ward Appearances of People's being affected among*
 “ *us, in time of preaching, and especially at sacramen-*
 “ *tal Occasions, in time of communicating, or other such*
 “ *solemn Seasons, may be reduced to these two Sorts.*
 “ *One is, hearing with a close, silent Attention, with*
 “ *Gravity and Greediness, discovered by fixed Looks;*
 “ *weeping Eyes, joyful or sorrowful like Countenances;*
 “ *evidencing Tenderness in hearing. Another Sort is,*
 “ *when † the Word is so affecting to the Congregation, as*
 “ *to make them lift up their Voice and weep aloud, some*
 “ *more depressedly, others more highly, and at times*
 “ *the whole Multitude in a Flood of Tears, all as it*
 “ *were crying out at once, till their Voice be ready to drown*
 “ *out the Minister's, so as he can scarcely be heard for*
 “ *the weeping Noise that surrounds him. And though*
 “ *we judge that the more solid and judicious of the Audi-*
 “ *tory are seldom so noisy as others, tho' perhaps as much*
 “ *and more affected inwardly, yet of these that are thus*
 “ *outwardly affected, we conceive some to be under a*
 “ *more common, and others under a special gracious*
 “ *Influence of the Spirit of God, which we can know*
 “ *only by the Fruits and Effects that follow. The*

“ com-
 “ † Mr. Webster's, When they lift up, &c.

“ common Influence |||, like a Land-flood, dries up, we
 “ hear of no Change wrought; *the other* appears after-
 “ ward in the Fruits of Righteousness and the Tract of
 “ a holy Conversation.

“ *As to the Impression the Word makes upon these whom*
 “ *we take afterward to be true Converts, the Degrees*
 “ *and Duration of a Law-work or Conviction are various,*
 “ *and the saving Issue comes to be known also at sundry*
 “ *Times and in divers Manners. Some have been more*
 “ *quickly touched and turned to the Lord and his Ways,*
 “ *others have been many Weeks, yea many Months, if not*
 “ *Tears, under much Heaviness, Bondage, grievous Ter-*
 “ *rors, and horrible Temptations; some relieved very*
 “ *gradually, with a Word now and a Word then imprest*
 “ *upon them, and some out-pouring of the Spirit upon them*
 “ *now and then, and further Degrees of Illumination and*
 “ *divine Teaching, till by little and little they have come*
 “ *to more Establishment in the Faith, and till they be*
 “ *brought off from all Confidence not only in their own*
 “ *Works and Duties in point of Justification before God,*
 “ *but also from all Confidence in and Dependence upon their*
 “ *best Frames, Tears, Enlargements, Influences and At-*
 “ *tainments, to a solid Life of Faith upon the Grounds*
 “ *that are unchangeable, viz. the Promise of God, the*
 “ *Righteousness of Christ, the Grace and Fulness that is*
 “ *in him, &c.*

“ May the Lord strengthen you to go on in his Work,
 “ and in praying for the coming of his Kingdom with you
 “ and us, I hope you shall not be forgotten among us
 “ in our joint Applications to the Throne of Grace.
 “ Pray let me hear at your leisure Hours more and more
 “ of what the Lord is doing among you. I am,

Reverend and very dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ,

RALPH ERSKINE.

||| In Mr. Webster's Copy, the Distinction between common and special Influence is indoltriously suppressed, and the Words made to run thus, *The Influence on some of these like, &c. But in others it appears, &c.*

Having thus, *Sir*, given out of your *own* Records the full Copy of the Letter you wrote to Mr. *Wesley*, together with your *own* Marks for discovering *Fraud* and *Fals-hood* ; I can safely leave others to judge how far the Discovery answers your *Title-page*.— The Mystery of Iniquity is now displayed in your *own* Light ; whoever will may look into it.

I don't think myself obliged to approve of Mr. *Wesley's* Conduct in omitting *one* *lota*, or varying a Letter ; or of Mr. *Traill's* Correspondent, in not designing the Copy he sent, *Part* of your Answer, as Mr. *Wesley* himself does.— But must at the same Time think, that the *Variations* and *Omissions* are of such Nature, as I can't conceive why this Course was taken, if not to save Paper ; nor what *fraudulent Purpose* Mr. *Wesley* could have in View.— I suppose he is well able to answer for himself, which possibly he may do in due Time :— Mean while, was he to stand or fall by my Decision, *taking the Fact according to your Representation*, I should incline to censure his *Judgment* rather than his *Integrity*.— Believe me, *Dear Sir*, had it been in my Option, I would doubtless have choosed, for proving the Point in question, to have insert your entire Letter with your *own* Imprimature. And, seeing you have furnished me with this Advantage, I can now again with greater Certainty say, That, so far as Mr. *Ralph Erskine's* Sentiments may be supposed to have Weight, — your Letter will be found a full Confutation of the Reverend Mr. *Gib's* leading Principle, *That a Man cannot be a Minister of Christ who has only Episcopal Ordination*.— A standing Testimony against the Act of the Associate Presbytery aient a Fast, dated *Dunfermline July 15th 1742* ; — A compleat Answer to Mr. *Fisher's* Review ; — A judicious Defence of the Work at *Cambuslang* ; — And a flat Contradiction to your *own* Sermon, intituled, *The true Christ no new Christ*, &c.

Suffer me to ask my old Friend and Acquaintance, Had Mr. *Wesley* then, or has he even now, *any* other than Episcopal Ordination, to whom notwithstanding you write as if he was a *Minister* and *Servant* of Christ, and

and to whom you subscribe yourself *an affectionate Brother and Servant in Christ*? Does not the foresaid Act say, "Tis no Wonder that the Lord hath, in his righteous Displeasure, left this Church and Land to give such an open Discovery of their Apostasy from him, in the fond Reception Mr. *George Whitefield* has met with, NOTWITHSTANDING that it is notourly known that he is a Priest of the Church of *England*, who hath sworn the Oath of *Supremacy*, and abjured the *Solemn League and Covenant*?" Does not this Act here lay particular Stress on Mr. *Whitefield's* being a Priest of the Church of *England*, &c. as one Reason at least of the Lord's supposed Displeasure against this Church for countenancing him? And do you not in the above Letter, when writing to Mr. *Wesley*, who was *then*, and is *still*, a Priest of the Church of *England*, and who has as well as Mr. *Whitefield* sworn the Oath of *Supremacy*, and consequently, according to the Doctrine of the *Associate Presbytery*, has abjured the *Solemn League and Covenant*; do you not, when writing *even to this Man*, say, "May he that hath the Keys of the House of *David*, that openeth and no Man shutteth, and shutteth and no Man openeth, set the Door of Faith more and more open among you, till his House be filled, and till he gather together the Outcasts of *Israel*? And may that Prayer for Adversaries be heard, *Fill their Faces with Shame, that they may seek thy Name, O Lord!*" Does it alter the Case, that you had Hopes (which, by the by, were without Ground) that he would some Time or other give up with the Church of *England*? Again, do not the foresaid Act, your Friend Mr. *Fisher*, and your own Sermon, &c. all conclude the Work in the West delusive, for this among other Reasons, That some of the Persons have been affected in an unusual outward Manner? And pray, *Dear Sir*, has not Mr. *Wesley* plainly told you, that the Work amongst them, in *most* of its Subjects, was attended with like, nay, more *extraordinary* outward Effects? And yet, notwithstanding all this, your Letter begins, "I desire to bless the Lord for the good and great News
" your

“ your Letter bears, about the Lord’s turning many
 “ Souls from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power
 “ of Satan unto God; and that ſuch a great and effectual
 “ Door is opened amongſt you as the many Adverſaries
 “ cannot ſhut, &c.” Will the Variation of THE Lord
 into *My Lord*, or *Mr. Weſley’s* having made you acknow-
 ledge the Subjection to the great Redeemer that this
My imports, *any how* weaken your Declaration concern-
 ing the Genuinenefs of the Work?

Was it needful to condeſcend on Particulars, I might
 obſerve, that *Mr. Fiſher* can find no Inſtances in Scripture,
 of *ſtrong Cries, Trembling, Quaking, Falling down as*
dead; and that you point out to his Conſideration, as I
 have done, *Paul*, and the *Jaylor*, and *Peter’s Hearers* (a).
Mr. Fiſher apprehends, P. 62. that the Riſe of the bod-
 dily Effects in the Caſe of *Cambuſlang, Kilſyth, &c.*
 “ is not only antiſcriptural, but diabolical; and that
 “ therefore every ſound Divine muſt maintain, in theſe
 “ Circumſtances, that they are inconſiſtent with a
 “ ſaving Work of the Spirit of God at the Time.”
Your Letter will afford at leaſt one Exception to his Rule:
Mr. Weſley informs you of the ſtrongest imaginable Caſe,
 “ ſome ſtruggling as in the Agonies of Death, ſo that
 “ four or five Men can hardly reſtrain a *weak Woman* or
 “ *Child* from hurting themſelves or others;” of which
 there is no Inſtance at *Cambuſlang*, nor indeed of any
 Thing ſo *ſurpriſing* and *inexplicable*. Yet even concerning
 this very Caſe of a *weak Woman*, and now a *weaker*
Child, contained it ſeems in the full Copy, you only ſay,
 “ This is to me *ſomewhat* more inexplicable, if it
 “ do not reſemble the Child ſpoken of *Mark ix. 26.*
 “ *Luke ix. 42.* of whom it is ſaid, that, while he was
 “ yet coming, the Devil threw him down, and tare
 “ him: Or what Influence ſudden and ſharp Awaknings
 “ may have upon ſudden bodily Convulſions, I pretend
 “ not

(a) Compare *Mr. Fiſher’s Review*, P. 31,---33. with the Begin-
 ning of *Mr. Weſley’s Letter*, and the firſt Part of 2d Paragraph
 to your own Letter.

“ not to explain,” &c. — “ However, you conclude the
 “ merciful Issue of these Conflicts, in the Conversion
 “ of these Persons thus affected, is the main Thing (b).”
 — It is perhaps proper here to remind you, that *Convul-*
sions are particularly mentioned among other bodily Ef-
 fects by Mr. Fisher, *Review*, p. 25. as the Sign of a
diabolical Work; and by you, p. 25. of your Sermon, as
 the Sign of a *delusive Work*. How do you reconcile this
 with your not pretending to explain “ what Influence
 “ sudden and sharp Awaknings may have upon sudden
 “ bodily Convulsions ?” Mr. Wesley’s Copy has it only,
on the Body. I cannot think you have hit on a proper
 Medium to reconcile the Contradiction, by changing the
 Expression into *sudden bodily Convulsions*.

Further, you seem to lay great Stress on the last Para-
 graph save one of your Letter, which, you said, was
mainly intended to discover a *saving Work*, and detecting
 a *delusive one*, and which you apprehend for that End was
 kept out of Mr. Wesley’s Copy. The Paragraph, Sir, seems
 to me well worthy of its Place ; — and by this *Touchstone*
 let the Subjects of the West be tried, by comparing the
 Account of them in my Letter, Mr. Robe’s Narrative, &c.,
 with what you have laid down as proper Marks; but
 must be excused for not choosing you as the Judge, —
 seeing tho’ you give as one Mark, “ a solid Life of Faith
 “ on the Grounds that are unchangeable, viz. the Pro-
 “ mise of God, the Righteousness of Christ, the Grace
 “ and Fulness that is in him ;” yet you will not admit,
 p. 15. that this takes place among those in the West, —
 tho’ told in express Words (c), “ Those who have at-
 “ tained Comfort, readily give a Reason of the Hope
 “ and Joy that is in them with Meekness and Fear; de-
 “ claring, to the Praise of Divine Grace, how the Holy
 “ Ghost, formerly a Convincer, proved also their Com-
 “ forter, by discovering their Warrant to lay hold on
 “ Jesus the Saviour, and happily determining them to
 “ em-

(b) This whole Paragraph being before inserted, needed not
 again here to be repeated

(c) *Divine Influence*, P. 4. second Edition,

" embrace a *whole* Christ, as *freely* offered in the Gospel,
 " for all their Salvation, and as all their Desire," &c.

It is urged as a mighty Objection, that many cry out in the Bitterness of their Soul. *Bitter Outcryings* are in your Sermon, p. 25. one Ground of this pathetick Exclamation, " How delusive is the Work ! " And the true Christ described, p. 33. to be " he that comes in the still " small Voice of the Gospel, which *alone* is the Power of " God to Salvation and Conversion, &c." Mr. *Fisher* too thinks, p. 31. *Peter's* Hearers did not speak all at once, because this would make a confused unintelligible Sound. But what then shall we judge of your own Congregations, concerning many of whom you say, " Another Sort is, that when the Word is so affecting to the " Congregation, as to make them lift up their Voice " and weep aloud, some more depressedly, others more " highly, and at Times the whole Multitude in a Flood " of Tears, all as it were crying out at ONCE, till " their Voice be ready to drown out the Minister's, so " as he can scarcely be heard for the weeping Noise that " surrounds him ? " Don't you affirm in the very Passage omitted by Mr. *Wesley*, concerning some of these thus outwardly affected, that they are " under a special gracious " Influence, which appears afterwards in the Fruits of " Righteousness, and Tract of a holy Conversation ? " I agree with you, that the more solid and judicious of the Auditory are seldom so noisy as others ; and it may be true, that, as you affirm, p. 44. that you seldom ever heard such clamorous Noise in Time of publick Worship; without giving a publick Check to it. But a certain Author was some Years ago of a different Mind, when, in an Elegy on the Death of Mr. *Moncrieff*, he thus emphatically expresseth the Divine Effects of his Ministry :

He preach'd and pray'd with such a joyful Noise,

A graceful Melody, a tuneful Voice ;

Yet with such pow'rful elevated Cries,

As forc'd sweet Echoes sweetly to arise.

While

*While special Breathings roused ev'ry Saint,
Some common Motions Heav'n to all did grant :
Then liquid Pearls did drop from ev'ry Eye,
Rebounding Echoes drown'd the Preacher's Cry ;
Voice answer'd Voice with mournful joyful Mone,
Pastor and People all one heav'nly Tone ;
Just like the Sound of the celestial Host,
Or rushing mighty Wind at Pentecost.*

Allow me to make one other Observation, That, in the Question before us, we don't build on unusual Symptoms, or pretend that Persons so affected must of Consequence be savingly wrought upon. We have all along admitted, that Men may cry out, may tremble, may faint, may seem to undergo the Pangs of Death, and yet still continue under the Power of Satan, and the Dominion of their Lusts ; and only plead, that such Effects on the Body are not incompatible with saving Operations on the Mind.—It is therefore lost Labour to tell us of Mr. Wesley's erroneous Principles, and of what you take for granted, without any Shadow of Proof, that the former Effects of his Ministry appear now delusive.—Be it so ; the Work in the West may nevertheless be real and divine : And it will still remain true, that your Letter admits that *such bodily Distress* may accompany a genuine Work of the Spirit, and have a saving Issue ; nay further, that like Instances seem to be exemplified in the outward Manner wherein *Paul* and the *Jaylor* and *Peter's* Hearers were at first affected. And this was *ALL* we contended for in the present Argument, and the chief Reason of appealing to your Letter.

On the whole, It appears to me so evident, that the entire Copy of your Letter is equally if not a stronger Proof of what I had formerly asserted in my Postscript, and particularly resumed, *p. 12.* of this Letter, that I should think it an Imputation on the common Understanding of my Readers to attempt any further Illustration ; and shall beg leave, if they want more Satisfaction, to refer them back to your own Remarks ; where they will see a *Volume*

writ to pervert a few plain Words into a Meaning hitherto unthought-of; — where they will find a *complete System* of Metaphysics; and, as I apprehend, they will likewise observe, I don't say a *weak Woman* or a *Child*, but a *Man*, even the Reverend Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, struggling as in the Agonies of Death (whether moved by a good or bad Spirit, let them judge) struggling to extricate himself from a Labyrinth of Contradictions, and still *more and more* entangled in the Net which he himself had wrought, till happily disengaged by finding out, in the Year 1743, p. 42. That when writing to Mr. *Wesley*, anno 1739, "he was but speaking in his own Name to a Man like himself, whom he then had good Thoughts of, and as *discreetly* as he could, in order to win him; but (in his Sermon) he was speaking in God's Name to a promiscuous Multitude, and as *plainly* as he could, in order to warn them."

I should have thought it not amiss, Sir, tho' ye had spoke in God's Name to *both*, that ye might have spoke the Truth. Mr. *Wesley*, the chief Instrument of the fatal Delusion, seemed to require your *free and faithful Advice*, rather than a Multitude not yet affected. — But, considering the *Delicacy* with which you was to manage this Point, you perhaps think it sufficient to say, as in p. 12. "In the Accounts I give of the Effects of a preached Gospel among us, the *very* Design of my Heart was to give Mr. *Wesley* a Swatch of another Kind of Work which I reckoned *truly Divine* and *Saving*, and likewise to give him a Warning against what I judged delusive in the *strange Work* he told me of." The Designs of your Heart must be left to the SUPREME JUDGE: — How far your Words are a Transcript of *such* Thoughts, the Reader will judge, by reviewing once more Mr. *Wesley's* Letter, together with your Answer, which begins, *I desire to bless the Lord for the good and great News your Letter bears, about the Lord's turning many Souls from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, &c.* and concludes (with a Passage criminally concealed by Mr.

Wesley)

Wesley) Pray let me hear at your Leisure-hours more and more of what the Lord is doing among you.

It ye can bear an Advice, let me beg of you, when writing for the future, to subjoin a *N. B.* when you write as a POET, when as a MAN, and when in the Name of God, that we may know what to believe, and what not. 'Tis but two Days since I had an Opportunity of considering your Charge of FRAUD and FALSHOOD, tho' it is no less than a Month since, by your Advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury*, the Alarm was sounded over the whole Nation; and this obliges me to give you the present Trouble so very soon after the Publication of yours.—

I have, it seems, been the *innocent Medium* of communicating an *imperfect* Copy of your Letter to the Publick; I sincerely wish, as the *proper* Reparation, that by this Means the *intire* one may have the most *universal* Spread: And am, with all due Regard,

R. D. Sir.

Yours, &c.

Edinbr. March 15.

1743.

ALEX. WEBSTER.